

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 USIA-06 PA-01 PRS-01 NSC-05 SS-15

EB-07 COME-00 CPR-01 /052 W
----- 080217

R 071550Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3898

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STOCKHOLM 663

E.E. 11652: NGXA

TAGS: OEXC, PFOR, SW

SUBJECT: HIGH-LEVEL SWEDISH BUSINESS GROUP'S VISIT TO U.S. AND
TURN-DOWN OF REQUEST TO CALL ON PRESIDENT GERALD FORD

REF: STOCKHOLM 364; STOCKHOLM 245

1. THE SVENSKA DAGBLADET OF FEBRUARY 7 CARRIED A FRONT
PAGE NEWS STORY FILED FROM WASHINGTON (BJORN AHLANDER) ON
THE TURN-DOWN OF THE REQUEST FOR AN APPOINTMENT FOR THE HIGH-
LEVEL SWEDISH BUSINESS GROUP LED BY PRINCE BERTIL TO MEET
WITH PRESIDENT FORD DURING THEIR SCHEDULED VISIT TO THE
UNITED STATES IN LATE FEBRUARY. AHLANDER SPECULATES THAT
THIS WHITE HOUSE DECISION WAS RELATED TO THE STATEMENT MADE
BY A "SWEDISH SPOKESMAN" (READ MFA MINISTER SVEN ANDERSSON)
CRITICIZING THE UNITED STATES FOR ITS PLANS TO INCREASE
ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH VIETNAM. HE REFERS TO THE AMERICAN
AMBASSADOR IN SWEDEN AND HIS EXPRESSION OF DISPLEASURE WITH
THE STATEMENT; AND A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SOURCE
(UNNAMED) WHO NOTED THAT OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
STATE MUST TREAD SOFTLY SINCE SECRETARY KISSINGER
HIMSELF HAS NOT FORGOTTEN THE "CAUSTIC -- AND PARTLY UNMOTIVA-
TED -- CRITICISM BY THE SWEDISH SPOKESMAN", AND FURTHER, THAT IT
WAS NOT DUE TO THE LACK OF TIME, BUT TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S OWN
IRRITATION THAT THE GROUP WAS NOT RECEIVED. THE WRITER
STATES THAT NEITHER THE FOREIGN OFFICE NOR AXEL IVEROTH OF
THE FERATION OF SWEDISH INDUSTRIES WHO WAS IN THE UNITED
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STATES TO PREPARE FOR THE BUSINESS GROUP'S VISIT HAD ANY

COMMENTS. THE WRITER STATES THAT THE FEELING IN THE SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTRY IS THAT THE VISIT PROGRAM WAS SO PRELIMINARY THAT "IT IS MEANINGLESS TO REGARD THE CANCELLED VISIT TO THE WHITE HOUSE AS A SNUB." NEVERTHELESS, HE GOES ON TO SAY THAT THE AMERICAN REACTION TO FOREIGN MINISTER ANDERSSON'S SPEECH HAS AGAIN MADE THE RELATIONS (BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES) "CHILLIER".

2. AFTONBLADET OF FEBRUARY 7 ALSO HEADLINED THE TURN-DOWN OF THE APPOINTMENT REQUEST AND STATES IN EFFECT THAT THE PAPER HAD CONFIRMED WITH AMBASSADOR WACHTMEISTER IN WASHINGTON THAT THE TURN-DOWN COULD NOT BE INTERPRETED IN ANY OTHER WAY THAN BY RELATING THE DECISION TO SVEN ANDERSSON'S SPEECH.

3. WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR IN OUR TALKS WITH SWEDISH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND WITH AXEL IVEROTH THAT WE HAVE HAD NO INFORMATION OR INDICATION THAT THERE WAS ANY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S SPEECH AND THE TURN-DOWN OF THE REQUEST BY THE SWEDISH BUSINESS GROUP FOR AN APPOINTMENT TO MEET WITH THE PRESIDENT.

4. I HAVE RECEIVED CALLS FROM AXEL IVEROTH AND FROM AMBASSADOR GUNNAR JARRING WHO IS SCHEDULED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SWEDISH BUSINESS GROUP ON WHETHER THE VISIT TO THE U.S. SHOULD BE CANCELLED. I SAID THAT THIS IS A MATTER FOR THEM TO DECIDE.

STRAUSZ-HUPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a

Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a

Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:

Document Number: 1975STOCKH00663
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00

Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A

Film Number: D750046-1048

From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a

Image Path:

ISecure: 1

Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750260/aaaaccip.tel

Line Count: 89

Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM

Office: ACTION CU

Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Original Handling Restrictions: n/a

Original Previous Classification: n/a

Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Page Count: 2

Previous Channel Indicators: n/a

Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a

Reference: 75 STOCKHOLM 364, 75 STOCKHOLM 245

Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED

Review Authority: GolinoFR

Review Comment: n/a

Review Content Flags:

Review Date: 11 JUN 2003

Review Event:

Review Exemptions: n/a

Review History: RELEASED <11 JUN 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <12 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>

Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:

Review Referrals: n/a

Review Release Date: n/a

Review Release Event: n/a

Review Transfer Date:

Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a

Secure: OPEN

Status: NATIVE

Subject: HIGH-LEVEL SWEDISH BUSINESS GROUP'S VISIT TO U.S. AND TURN-DOWN OF REQUEST TO CALL ON PRESIDENT GERALD FORD

TAGS: OEXC, SW

To: STATE

Type: TE

Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006